



TRANSITIONAL SHELTER ASSISTANCE IN TAJIKISTAN

Final Report

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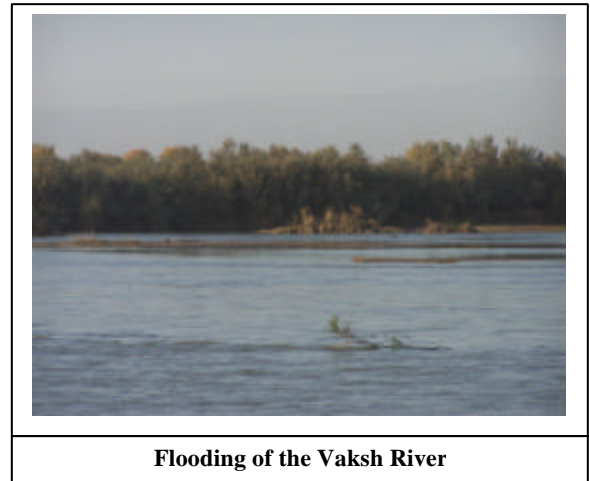
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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Program Title	Transitional Shelter Assistance in Tajikistan
Location	Khatlon and Sughd Oblasts, Tajikistan
Type of Disaster	Floods and Landslides
Period of the Program	Eight Months
Total Number of Beneficiaries	1,194 People (199 Families)
Amount Requested from OFDA	USD \$647,648
Total In-Kind Contribution	USD \$343,611
Total Cash Contribution (other parties)	USD \$25,000
Total Program Amount	USD \$1,016,259

A. Background

A series of floods and landslides in spring/summer 2005 threatened the personal security of hundreds of families in Tajikistan. Excessive run-off from melting snow in the Pamir Mountains and Zeravhsan Range along with heavy rainfalls resulted in the displacement of families and destruction of homes and infrastructure. In Khatlon Oblast, approximately 12,000 individuals were affected by the flooding, with more than 10,000 people evacuated from their homes. In Penjikent District of Sughd Oblast, 3,500 people had their homes damaged, and 1,200 were relocated to a new settlement. The Government of Tajikistan appealed for international assistance in the disaster-stricken areas.



B. Objectives

The goal of this project was to resettle and restore the livelihoods of families displaced by the floods and landslides in Tajikistan. This was accomplished through the implementation of a shelter construction and “food-for-work” program. SFL completed the project over an eight-month period at a total cost of **USD \$1,016,259**, with **USD \$647,648** from OFDA. The objectives of this project were the following:

- Enable the construction of 199 transitional shelters and 79 latrines
- Provide “food-for-work” opportunities for local construction laborers

C. Indicators

<u>Goal</u>	<u>Achieved</u>
• Number of shelters constructed (199 targeted)	199
• Number of latrines constructed (79 targeted)	79
• Total number of beneficiaries served (1,194 targeted)	1436

While the following are not technically indicators in the strictest sense, they are useful tools in understanding the outcomes of the project.

• Number of laborers hired for food-for-work opportunities	1280
• Total value of food paid to locally hired workers	\$243,432USD
• Number of national staff employed	30

- Total amount of money paid to national staff **\$28,328 USD**
- Percentage of total/dollar materials purchased locally **100%, \$478,582USD**

As can be seen, the number of beneficiaries directly served with a new house was somewhat higher than originally estimated. That is due to larger than usual family sizes, especially in the Khatlon region. There is some overlap between the number of beneficiaries and the number of laborers hired for food-for-work. One person from each household received food for his labor, as well as four to six people hired from outside the family. Including these laborers, the number of people impacted directly by the project is 2,517 individuals. The entire beneficiary population of Sarazm (120 families, 751 people) is IDPs. They were relocated from villages throughout the district of Penjikent to one new site. For a detailed look at the demographics of the beneficiary households, see Appendix B.

II. AREAS OF ACTIVITY

A. Sarazm

The Sarazm community is a newly created community made up of IDPs from villages damaged by flooding rivers and landslides in the Penjikent district. The government of Penjikent hoped to relocate 490 families to Sarazm. SFL is familiar with this region, having worked with many of these families in previous disaster mitigation projects. While 167 families were being helped directly by the government, SFL targeted 120 households for shelter assistance. These 120 families were selected based on their need, as well as their ability to provide matching contributions. By mid-October, the beneficiaries were selected and work commenced. By October 21, 2005, bids were received from suppliers, and materials had started arriving on site.



Block Making in Sarazm

The field team that SFL had in place was made up of construction supervision veterans as well as an engineer and logistics supervisor. Several of the construction supervisors were borrowed from a local NGO that SFL has partnered with in past disaster mitigation projects. This was done not only to have already skilled supervisors, but to continue to build capacity in our local partners. Due to Sarazm's distance from our central office in Dushanbe, most of the basic building supplies were purchased locally. The more expensive items and materials that needed to have a high level of quality, such as iron roofing sheets and wood, had to be purchased at the construction bazaar in Hissor.

Work started quite fast, relative to the other sites, with 53 sites excavated by the end of October. The major reason for this speed of construction was that since these families were IDPs they did not have a support network to help them, and they did not have friends or family with whom to live during the construction period. From late December until March, work slowed down considerably due to weather. Not only was it cold, which interrupts activities like mud brick production, but there were large amounts of snow and sleet, which made work impossible for weeklong stretches at a time. By the second half of March, families were once again able to work on their houses, and by the beginning of April, all 120 houses were successfully completed. All houses were occupied by May.

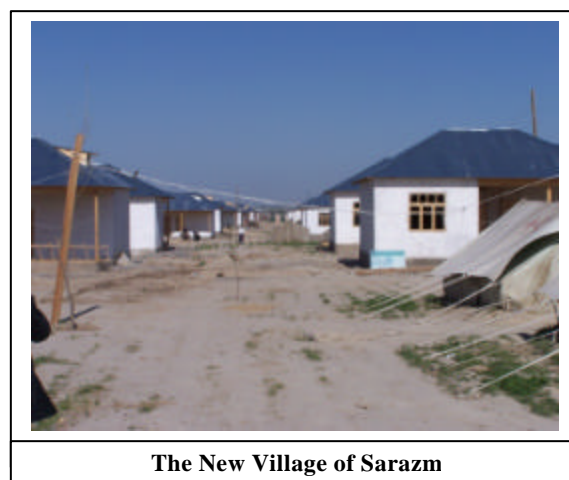


Table 1

Sarazm Construction Activities Finished													
	November		December		January		February		March		April		Total
<i>Activity</i>	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	
Excavation	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
Foundation	39	101	118	119	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
Walls to Window	0	43	68	79	87	92	96	109	120	120	120	120	120
Walls to Ring Beam	0	31	55	67	77	83	84	90	106	120	120	120	120
Ring Beam	0	0	12	57	72	80	81	84	95	120	120	120	120
Rafters	0	0	10	49	67	79	79	82	91	115	120	120	120
Truss Work	0	0	4	41	66	77	79	81	86	112	120	120	120
Roofing	0	0	0	37	65	77	79	81	86	112	120	120	120
Door	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	15	41	99	120	120	120
Window	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	15	52	105	120	120	120
Finishing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	52	105	120	120	120

B. Ghalaba

In Ghalaba (population 1,400), located in southern Khatlon Oblast, a rising water table and a clogged drainage canal contributed to flooding which destroyed 80 homes and damaged another 149 others. Much of this damage was due to over-irrigation. Twenty-nine (29) of the households were able to rebuild their own homes, but 48 families needed additional assistance. Before work began, SFL received assurances from the Ministry of Emergency Services (MES) and the local hukumat (local government body) that the canal would be cleaned out, minimizing future flooding occurrences. The hukumat also provided affected families with land within the village for the construction of new transitional shelters.

The Ghalaba project, like all three Khatlon project sites, included the construction of latrines. The latrines, as per Sphere guidelines, were located less than 50m from the dwelling and more than 30m from ground water sources. Just like the shelters, the latrines were built with 50% beneficiary contribution.

SFL partnered with Global Partners (GP) in Ghalaba to provide disaster mitigation training and material warehousing. GP provided tents for warehousing and designed a pamphlet, which was distributed among the laborers and households, and used as a training tool for safer construction techniques. GP also provided a cash contribution of \$21,900, which was applied against material costs and transportation.



Tent Warehouse Provided by Global Partners

SFL contracted with a local NGO, Development Agency, which is working with returnee boys who have come back from Pakistan. These boys had been originally promised a good education in Pakistan; however, the education they received was short on practical skills. Now that these boys have returned to Tajikistan, this local NGO has a program set up to teach a number of them carpentry skills. These boys received a bit of theory each day, and with the help of the USAID transitional shelter program, they then put the theory into practice by working on doors and windows, which would be used in the homes being built in Ghalaba. In addition to building doors and windows, 15 of the boys were provided opportunities to work on the actual construction of the houses in Ghalaba, thus giving them the experience to further their skills by working under trained masons and engineers building the homes using earthquake safer construction practices.

Beneficiary selection in Ghalaba took somewhat longer due to the nature of the disaster. Some of the houses were outright destroyed, which made selection easy; unfortunately, there were also some houses that were habitable and families did not want to vacate their original dwellings. SFL met with the MES in Kurgan-Teppa (KT) in early December to select the final 17 beneficiaries. Complicating the matter was the fact that, while SFL wanted to select the most vulnerable families, these families had the most difficult time obtaining the material contribution for the construction of their houses. Once these families managed to provide their contributions, they were added to the list, and construction could commence. As a result, work in Ghalaba took somewhat longer to get started; but due to favorable weather and hard work, they finished early in March, ahead of schedule.



Home Built in Ghalaba

Table 2

Ghalaba Construction Activities Finished													
	November		December		January		February		March		April		Total
<i>Activity</i>	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	
Excavation	0	29	34	37	44	45	46	46	48	48	48	48	48
Foundation	0	19	28	32	35	39	42	48	48	48	48	48	48
Walls	0	14	24	27	28	34	35	40	48	48	48	48	48
Rafters/Truss Work	0	0	14	24	27	31	35	39	48	48	48	48	48
Roofing	0	0	11	24	27	31	34	35	41	48	48	48	48
Door	0	0	0	1	1	10	13	25	35	48	48	48	48
Window	0	0	0	0	0	10	13	25	35	48	48	48	48
Finishing	0	0	0	0	0	10	13	25	35	45	48	48	48

C. Pasarik

Pasarik (population 1,200) lies along the bank of the Vaksh River, and last summer's rising water levels ate away at the riverbanks, destroying 4 houses and threatening 36 others. Twelve (12) of the families received land allotments from the hukumat and proceeded to build new houses elsewhere, leaving 28 families in need of assistance. When we received the beneficiary list from the local government, it turned out that there were a few irregularities. Two of the families were subsequently removed from the list and were replaced with one new household in late December.



Houses in Pasarik

One family started construction on their home before the SFL project engineers were able to assess the area. A problem arose as to whether this family, while on the approved beneficiary list for SFL/hukumat, should receive a new house or should SFL only help them finish their already started home which has been completed up to wall level. The problem this presented was that the structure was not built using mud bricks, but rather with mud-poured walls and no wooden stitching (providing earthquake mitigation). After inspecting the home, it was decided that if the beneficiary would put in a concrete ring beam, instead of the standard wooden ring beam, SFL could help with some wall anchoring and continue materials distribution for the roof.

Work started fairly rapidly in Pasarik, except for a few families who were busy with the end-of-year cotton harvest. Also, due to the late addition of one household, work was not finished completely until mid-April. In Pasarik and, to a lesser degree, Ghalaba, we noticed an interesting phenomenon. As houses began to get finished, the building of others sped up rapidly. It turned out that as families finished their homes, they went to help their neighbors in a 'barn-raising' (the Tajik term "hasar") style.

In Pasarik, two of the beneficiaries were brothers, and instead of the two-room shelters being built, they wanted to combine their shelters to build a larger four-room house. Our project engineer came up with a design that retained earthquake mitigation features. It is much better to comply with requests like this than to risk the families making additions to the houses later, which may compromise the structural integrity of the finished structure.

Table 3

Pasarik Construction Activities Finished													
	November		December		January		February		March		April		Total
<i>Activity</i>	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	
Excavation	0	24	26	26	26	27	27	28	28	28	28	28	28
Foundation	0	20	25	26	26	27	27	28	28	28	28	28	28
Walls	0	14	21	22	22	23	25	27	27	27	28	28	28
Truss Work	0	0	14	19	21	21	22	23	25	27	28	28	28
Roofing	0	0	1	14	19	21	21	23	25	27	28	28	28
Door	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	23	28	28	28
Window	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	23	28	28	28
Finishing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	23	27	28	28

D. Hamadoni

In Hamadoni, there was some mild flooding, and the MES asked us to help three families that needed assistance. As in Pasarik, two of the beneficiaries were brothers, and they asked to build one larger house--a request that SFL granted. These three families were very motivated and worked to get most of their houses completed before winter.

Table 4

Hamadoni Construction Activities Finished													
	November		December		January		February		March		April		Total
<i>Activity</i>	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	
Excavation	0	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Foundation	0	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Walls	0	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Truss Work	0	0	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Roofing	0	0	0	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Door	0	0	0	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Window	0	0	0	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Finishing	0	0	0	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

III. CHALLENGES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Challenges

Weather – Weather, or more specifically, poor weather, played a large role in the implementation of the project. There was a rush in the fall to make sure that materials were delivered so that foundation and wall work could begin. The reason for this is that mud-brick production needs warm and dry conditions. If it is cold and dry, bricks can still be produced, but the length of time needed for them to dry increases greatly while the structural integrity decreases. Rain and snow, in general, are not conducive to construction, but these conditions were prevalent in most areas, especially in Sarazm. Snow also seals off the Anzob Pass (the highway mountain pass that separates Aini/Penjikent from Hissor/Dushanbe) every winter from December until May, causing transportation difficulties for materials and workers between Hissor and Penjikent.

Beneficiary Selection – This was a problem, primarily in the poorer Khatlon province, because many of the beneficiaries were initially unable to provide their contribution of materials. Their contributions were especially important early in the project as it included sand and gravel for the foundation. While there were still some changes being made to the beneficiary lists in December, most of the issues were solved by early November.

Motivation – While most beneficiaries were motivated to build their houses as fast as possible, especially in Hamadoni and Ghalaba, there were times when the beneficiaries let up in their efforts. The cold weather also contributed to a reduced level of motivation in that people found temporary living arrangements with relatives and then had to be persuaded to continue working. With the Food-for-Work (FFW) component of the project, WFP delivers food upon completion of the project; but in mid-March, the workers in Sarazm stopped working for a week and demanded their food right away. SFL resolved this work stoppage, but it did show some weaknesses in the project design. Rather than relying on one source of payment for labor (FFW), a more diversified portfolio should be used.

Achievements/Successes

Government Assistance – The government, both the MES in Khatlon and the hukumat for Penjikent, gave considerable assistance to the project. One standout example regarded the water supply in Sarazm. The only convenient available water source in the area was technically from Uzbekistan. The irrigation canal that was available to the community had been damaged for over 5 years. In a truly coordinated effort, the local community offered to dig small ditches from another canal that runs alongside a road close to the community, and the local government agreed to pump water in this canal for 2 hours a day to supply the community with water. This water then runs along the small ditches prepared by the beneficiaries to collection points so that water can be used throughout the day, not only during the 2-hour window while water is being pumped. Besides helping out with the water situation, the hukumat also provided 1,000 fired bricks for each family that could be used as the first and second course of bricks for walls as well as a house at the project site for our supervisors to use as a day camp. In early March, when the weather finally improved allowing work to commence, there were a few families without bricks and, therefore, unable

to complete their walls. The hukumat donated enough bricks to these families so that wall construction could begin immediately rather than wait for the mud bricks to be made (1-2 weeks).

Suppliers – The suppliers that SFL worked with did a fantastic job of meeting our needs and expectations. Arrangements were made to purchase roofing sheets from a supplier based in Hissor in mid-November. Within one week of signing the contract, this supplier was able to deliver all the roofing sheets over the pass just days before it closed to traffic. Obviously, this was a major achievement for us not only in the fact that we had the materials at the site rather than being stuck on the other side of a mountain pass, but also the beneficiary families could use the roofing sheets supplied to them to protect other construction materials (such as mud brick and cement) as winter came to the region.

Recognition – A celebration on May 19, 2006 for the new community of Sarazm to mark the completion of the 120 shelters in the Penjikent region had been arranged by the SFL project administrator, Philip Ammar. Joining in this ceremony was the Deputy Chief of Mission for the US Embassy in Tajikistan, Mr. Thomas Armbruster, along with Mr. Jon Larsen, the Public Diplomacy Officer.

IV. PROJECT SUMMARY

As for meeting the project's stated objectives:

- Enable the construction of 199 transitional shelters and 79 latrines
- Provide "food-for-work" opportunities for local construction laborers

This project succeeded admirably. Within 7 months, and that included a difficult winter, 199 families built new shelters, 1,280 workers benefited from a food-for-work program providing their families with much needed sustenance. In addition to receiving food, many of the workers had no construction (carpentry or masonry) experience. This project provided them with skills that they could use in other income generating projects. As a relief effort, this was a success.

That being said, a post-project monitoring survey proved that there are still needs in the communities. In Ghalaba, there is no source of drinking water nearby, and people have to use boiled canal water. In Pasarik, where the local government is even poorer than in Ghalaba, the new houses are not supplied with electricity as well as not having drinking water nearby. Compared to the families in Khatlon, the families who have been relocated to Sarazm are relatively well off. The hukumat of Penjikent was very helpful in providing electricity and a source of drinking water to the community. Nonetheless, there are still problems in this community as shown by latrines, which have yet to be built, that were promised by another NGO.

While sustainable shelter was a stated goal of the proposal, and that was achieved, it was hoped that providing new shelters and giving people new construction skills would help with income generation locally. However, it turned out that many of the workers, after finishing their houses,

left for Russia to find employment with their newly found skills. If we were to do this project again, it would be prudent to work some plan to mitigate emigration into the proposal. In Penjikent, where the hukumat plans to open up a new factory, employment has been offered in the factory, thus providing the income necessary for the remaining 203 families to build houses in Sarazm. A donor, however, must be persuaded to provide the housing construction materials in order to put this innovative plan in action.

These issues aside, however, the people are happy that they were able to receive assistance from USAID and SFL, and furthermore, they were able to develop new life skills.